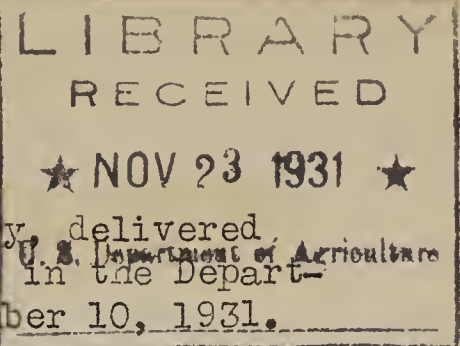


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A radio talk by W. R. Beattie, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered through station WRC and 44 other associate NBC radio stations, in the Department period of the National Farm and Home Hour, Tuesday, November 10, 1931.

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Well folks, on last Saturday I broke away from my moorings, as the old sailors would say, and spent the day cruising by automobile through the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia in order to get a look at the great apple orchards of that region. Incidentally I visited the big cider mill and vinegar factory at Winchester, Va. and saw a veritable mountain of apples waiting to be crushed for cider and later to be converted into vinegar. Most of the apple crop had been picked and the best of the fruit packed and in storage but thousands of bushels of the fallen fruit was being moved toward that mountain of apples at the big cider mill.

I drove through several of the orchards because I wanted to see what condition the trees were in after the removal of the crop. In most cases the orchards were just as the apple pickers had left them. The poles used for propping the branches were still under the trees, a few broken limbs were hanging or on the ground, but on the whole the trees are in excellent condition. In several of the orchards I found where young trees have been planted as replacements where older trees have died. These orchards are mainly in sod culture but a space was cultivated around each of the young trees.

In growing fruit of any kind there is very little if any gap between the gathering of one crop and the starting of another and it will not be long before the apple growers will be in their orchards cleaning up and getting ready for pruning and dormant spraying.

There are one or two matters in the care of young trees that should be attended to immediately. One is to clean away around the base of each tree so that field mice and pine mice will not gnaw the bark and kill the trees. These mice can be trapped and poisoned and in this connection Farmers' Bulletin No. 1-3-9-7 will prove a great help to any of you who have this mouse problem to contend with in your orchards. The weather is getting colder and soon these mice will be hunting for fresh food and before you know it they may be working at the base of some of your young trees. A new edition of Farmers' Bulletin No. 1397 has just been issued to meet the demand that arises at this time of the year. On page 6 of this little bulletin there is an illustration showing how to surround the trunk of an apple tree with closely woven wire as a protection from both mice and rabbits. Don't forget that rabbits begin to gnaw the bark from the trees just as soon as the nights become frosty.

Farmers' Bulletin No. 1-3-6-9 on Bridge Grafting might be termed a sequel to the one on mouse control for No. 1369 tells how to save a tree in case you should be so unfortunate as to have it girdled by mice or rabbits. A tree that has been completely girdled may often be saved by bridge grafting.

Many years ago there was an undesirable alien landed on our western shores and for want of a better name we call it the San Jose scale. This miserable insect has spread all over the country and its control is a problem for every fruit grower. Spraying the trees during the fall and winter while they are dormant is the usual solution of the problem. Two types of spray

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material are being used, lime-sulphur solution and miscible oil emulsions. The lime-sulphur concentrate can be purchased ready prepared and all you have to do is dilute it with water and apply it. On the other hand it can be prepared from the raw materials lime and sulphur.

I doubt if it would pay me, or any small-scale fruit grower to set up the necessary equipment and prepare the lime-sulphur concentrate but many of the big orchardists have their lime-sulphur plants right in or near the orchard and prepare their own spray materials. Farmers' Bulletin No. 1-2-8-5 on Lime-Sulphur Concentrate, Preparation, Uses and Designs for Plants, tells how to build a plant and to make the concentrated spray material. A new edition of Farmer's Bulletin No. 1285 is just off the press and if you have job of dormant spraying to handle this fall and winter you may need a copy of this bulletin as a guide. Dormant spraying is essential wherever apples, peaches, plums and pears are grown, then the lime-sulphur spray is used in a very dilute form during the summer to control brown rot and other diseases.

The northern fruit growers are not alone in their insect and disease troubles for here is a reprint of Farmers' Bulletin No. 9-3-3 on Spraying for the control of insects and mites attacking citrus trees in Florida. Rather a long title but this matter of keeping citrus trees free from insects is a big job for the grower. The bulletin says that more than 95 per cent of the damage caused to citrus trees by insects and mites in Florida may be attributed to six species. Then the bulletin goes on to describe these pests and to tell how to spray to control them. I might devote my whole time on the air to a description of one of these insects, the citrus white fly, for example but Farmer's bulletin 933 tells the whole story much better than I could.

I notice that quite a number of orchardists are putting in what are termed centralized spray outfits and are using this means for spraying their orchards instead of the portable sprayers. By the centralized system a central mixing and pumping plant is installed, lines of pipes are laid to all parts of the orchard and the spraying is done with leads spray hose 100 to 200 feet long. With the lines of pipe about 300 feet apart and hose connections every 200 or 300 feet all parts of the orchard can be reached. The pipes are buried underground and so arranged that they can be completely drained when not in use. I hope to give more detailed information regarding these outfits at a later date.

We will not have a garden calendar talk next week but two weeks from today will be the regular meeting of the Progressive Garden Club, and by the way the meeting will be held at the Farm home of Farmer Brown and Mrs. Brown so we are expecting a big turnout and a good time.